
SECTION 500 CERTIFICATION ACCEPTANCE PROGRAM

ADOT, with FHWA review and approval, may delegate to local governments the authority to self-administer projects under the certification acceptance program. If approved, a local government is granted authority to design, advertise and award, and administer construction of local projects. ADOT will review and approve the project design concept report, review the environmental determination, provide environmental clearance, and process Federal funds authorization.

510 CERTIFICATION ACCEPTANCE APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The following is a brief summary of steps performed in approving a local agency for the certification/acceptance program. These steps are by no means all inclusive of the process.

1. Local agency submits a formal request to the ADOT Local Government Section to initiate process of evaluating the local agency's qualifications for approval to self-certify and accept their construction projects. The Local Government Section coordinates review and approval of the local agency's program.
2. The local agency is provided information regarding certification acceptance requirements.
3. The local agency and appropriate ADOT District office coordinate ADOT's oversight and evaluation of the local agency's administration of one or more construction projects.
4. The local agency submits their documented certification acceptance process to ADOT for review. The local agency's process must demonstrate a thorough understanding of ADOT and FHWA processes, policies, and specifications.
5. Designated areas of ADOT, such as, Engineering Consultant Services, Contracts and Specifications, Roadway Design, Civil Rights Office, Construction Operations, and the District, as well as the FHWA, review the documentation and meet with the local agency to evaluate their processes. Typical items reviewed are the local agency's organization, standards and procedures, regulations, applicable laws, and past performance.
6. Following resolution of comments and approval of final documentation, the ADOT Director and local agency authority sign an approved procedures document.
7. A workshop is held with ADOT, the local agency, and FHWA to facilitate implementation of the local agency's procedures and adherence to requirements.

ADOT is obligated to conduct this process in accordance with the “ADOT-FHWA Operating Partnership,” which details responsibilities and requirements. A periodic review of the local agency’s operation and administration of projects should be conducted at least once every four years according to the partnership agreement.

511 Items Reviewed for Qualification

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>REVIEW REQUIREMENTS</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Project Scoping andb) Design Exceptions/Variances <i>ADOT Contact:</i> <i>Tim Wilson, Roadway Predesign</i> <i>(602) 712-6962</i>c) Standards <i>ADOT Contact:</i> <i>Chris Cooper, Roadway Design</i> <i>(602) 712-8493</i>d) Specifications <i>ADOT Contact:</i> <i>Barry Crockett, Contracts & Specifications</i> <i>602-712-7221</i>	<p>Procedures used for project development</p> <p>Procedures for approval of design exceptions as part of Project Scoping.</p> <p>Design & Construction standards.</p> <p>Project administration and materials specifications (PS&E).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ENVIRONMENTAL APPROVAL <i>ADOT Contact:</i> <i>Mary Frye, Local Government Section</i> <i>602-712-7137</i>	<p>Use ADOT/FHWA process.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) R/W clearance and certification <i>ADOT Contact:</i> <i>Louis Malloque, R/W Project Management</i> <i>602-712-8755</i>	<p>Response to FHWA 34 point questionnaire.</p>

- UTILITIES & RAILROADS
 - a) Utility clearance certification

Procedures for prior rights determination.
Procedures for federal-aid reimbursement of utility relocation costs.
 - b) Railroad/Highway Grade crossing
ADOT Contact:
Bruce Vana, P.E., Utility/RR Section
602-712-8681

Procedures for project agreements with the RR for railroad projects improved as part of a highway construction project.
- PROCUREMENT
 - a) Procurement of Consultants

Procurement procedures.

ADOT Contact:
Carrie Satterlee, Engineering Consultants Services
(602) 712-7532
 - b) Procurement of contractors

Procurement code and procedures for construction projects.
Complete bid package.

ADOT Contact:
Barry Crockett, Contracts & Specs
602-712-7221
 - c) Equipment Procurement

Equipment procurement code and procedures

ADOT Contact:
Terri Johnson, Procurement
(602)-712-8364
- CIVIL RIGHTS
 - a) DBE requirements for procurement of Consultants

Procedures for establishing percentages.
 - b) DBE requirements for construction projects

Procedures for establishing percentages
10% Goal for all projects.

ADOT Contact:
Lisa Wormington, Civil Rights Office
602-712-7761
- CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION
 - a) Construction Inspection
 - b) Materials Testing
 - c) Quality Assurance, Independent testing, frequencies
 - d) Project Final Acceptance
 - e) Labor Compliance
 - f) Resolution of Claims

Procedures for items a – f.

ADOT Contacts:
Allan Samuels, Construction Operations Section
602-712-8940
Appropriate ADOT District Office

- **INTERNAL AUDIT PROCEDURES**
ADOT Contact:
, Audit & Analysis
602-712-8368
- **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**
 - a) FHWA Authorization of Federal-aid Funds
 - b) Reimbursement of contractor payments and other eligible federal-aid costs.
 - c) Records Retention
 - d) ADOT Process Review*ADOT Contact:*
John Dickson, Local Government Section
602-712-8683

Approval of the single audit process by ADOT.

ADOT will provide the procedures, and the format for all administrative procedures.

Bill Vachon, FHWA, (602) 379-3646, is involved in all of the activities of the Certification Acceptance process.

520 CERTIFICATION ACCEPTANCE PROCESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

521 Request for Federal and TRACS Project Numbers

ADOT provides federal-aid and TRACS project numbers for all federal-aid design, R/W, utility, and construction projects. Requests for project numbers are submitted by the local agency to the ADOT Local Government Section, and should be requested prior to the start of the project development process. Include with the request, the project location, termini, project length, project cost including construction engineering, the expected bid advertisement date, a copy of the approved MPO or COG federal-aid program project budget, and the MPO or COG policy regarding federal-aid participation in change orders. A separate line item for federal-aid design, utility, and R/W projects should be shown in the MPO or COG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Approximately two weeks are required for project numbers to be assigned and transmitted to the local agency. Project folders will contain comprehensive documentation of the project development and construction administration process including all approvals given.

521.1 Safety Projects

To qualify for Federal-aid safety funds, a project eligibility request must be submitted to ADOT Local Government Section. Local Government Section and FHWA staff review the request and make a determination if the project is eligible for federal safety funds. The notice of project funding eligibility will be sent to the project sponsor by Local Government Section. It is recommended that project eligibility be determined prior to the inclusion of the project in the 5 year local government highway construction program. Once a project

is approved and a request for a federal-aid and TRACS project numbers has been obtained, a firm bid advertisement date should be provided. ADOT manages safety projects on a first-come basis and must manage the project financing and obligation of funds for projects with other safety projects scheduled statewide in accordance with the program funding limits established by ADOT. Any conflict with the expected bid advertisement date for a project and other projects in the Local Government 24 Month Schedule will be discussed with the project sponsor. See section 300 of this manual for additional information regarding safety funds.

521.2 Bridge Replacement/Rehabilitation Projects

To qualify for Federal-aid bridge replacement and rehabilitation funds, a project eligibility request must be submitted to ADOT Local Government Section. Local Government Section and FHWA staff review the request and make a determination if the project is eligible for federal bridge replacement or rehabilitation funds. A notice of project funding eligibility will be sent to the project sponsor by Local Government Section. It is recommended that project eligibility be determined prior to the inclusion of the project in the 5 year local government highway construction program. Once a project is approved and a request for a federal-aid and TRACS project numbers have been obtained, a firm bid advertisement date shall be provided. ADOT manages bridge funds on a first-come basis and must manage the project financing and obligation of funds for bridge projects scheduled statewide in accordance with the program funding limits established by ADOT. Any conflict with the expected bid advertisement date a project and other projects in the Local Government 24 Month Schedule will be discussed with the project sponsor. See section 400 of this manual for additional information.

522 Environmental Determination and Clearance Process

All federal-aid projects require an environmental analysis and an Environmental Clearance certification. The project sponsor is responsible for obtaining all needed information and data, and preparing reports in accordance with ADOT format. The format and additional information is available in Appendix C of this manual and on the ADOT website. The final Environmental Clearance will be issued by ADOT or FHWA. A letter identifying the type of environmental determination and information required for analysis will be sent by the Local Government Section NEPA Planner to the project sponsor. The analysis of information provided by the project sponsor for projects that meet Categorical Exclusion requirements will be prepared by ADOT. All other environmental analysis work is the responsibility of the project sponsor. If Federal funds are used for design, final design (design beyond 30% plans) and right-of-way negotiation cannot be initiated until environmental clearance has been obtained.

523 Design Projects

All requests for authorization of federal-aid funds for project design costs are submitted to ADOT Local Government Section. Design projects may require two authorization requests; one for preliminary engineering design and one for final design. Included with

the request is the cost for the preliminary (up to 30% design stage) and final design work, the federal-aid pro-rata share, and the local matching share of the project cost. ADOT will request authorization of federal-aid funds on the local agency's behalf and will transmit a copy of FHWA authorization to the local agency. Costs incurred prior to FHWA authorization are not eligible for federal-aid reimbursement. Design can not proceed beyond the 30% stage without environmental clearance if Federal funds are used for design.

524 Utility Relocation Costs

All requests for authorization of federal-aid funds for utility preliminary engineering and relocation costs is submitted to ADOT Utilities and Railroad Section. Included with the request is the cost for the utility preliminary engineering and relocation work, the federal-aid pro-rata share, and the local matching share of the project cost. ADOT will request authorization of federal-aid funds on the local agency's behalf and will transmit a copy of FHWA authorization to the local agency. Costs incurred prior to FHWA authorization are not eligible for federal-aid reimbursement.

525 Right-of-Way Acquisitions Costs

All requests for authorization of federal-aid funds for R/W acquisition costs are submitted to the ADOT R/W Public Liaison Section. Included with the request is the cost for the right-of-way acquisition work, the federal-aid pro-rata share, and the local matching share of the project cost. ADOT will request authorization of federal-aid funds on the local agency's behalf and will transmit a copy of FHWA authorization to the local agency. Costs incurred prior to FHWA authorization are not eligible for federal-aid reimbursement.

526 Project Agreements and Requests for Reimbursement of Design, R/W, and Utility Costs

ADOT will execute a project agreement with FHWA for design, R/W, and utility relocation project costs on the local jurisdiction's behalf. A copy of the project agreement will be transmitted to the local jurisdiction. All requests for reimbursement of design, R/W, and utility relocation payments and other eligible federal-aid costs are submitted to ADOT Accounts Receivable Section, Administrative Services Division. Requests should be prepared using ADOT's payment forms. Requests for reimbursement can be made once monthly. All reimbursement requests must be received between the 10th and the 25th of the month. For large projects where project related costs and individual monthly reimbursement requests will exceed \$1,000,000, a cash flow projection schedule should be provided to Accounts Receivable Section prior to the start of the project. This schedule is necessary for the monitoring of ADOT's cash flow and the facilitation of the federal-aid reimbursement process with FHWA.

527 Change Orders for Design, R/W and Utility Costs and Modified Project Agreement Requests

If the MPO or COG policy provides for federal-aid participation in the cost of change orders and when project costs exceed the amount of federal-aid described in the project agreement, a request for a modified project agreement can be made. ADOT will modify the project agreement in accordance with MPO or COG policy regarding federal-aid participation of change orders costs.

530 CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

All requests for authorization of federal-aid funds for construction are submitted by the local agency to ADOT Local Government Section. Environmental clearance, utility clearance and R/W clearance certification dates must be provided in the request as well as a statement that design exceptions (have/have not) been (requested/approved) for the project. Also include a cost breakdown showing the estimate for the project detailing the estimate for construction engineering cost, the federal-aid pro-rata share, and the local matching funds share of the project cost. An ADOT PS&E Review Sheet Package of completed forms should be included with the authorization request. ADOT will request authorization of federal-aid funds on the local agency's behalf and will transmit a copy of FHWA authorization to the local agency. FHWA authorization is required prior to construction project advertisement for bid. Costs incurred prior to FHWA authorization are not eligible for federal-aid reimbursement. After the project bids have been opened, certified and the project awarded, a copy of the executed contract with the contractor and an agreement estimate prepared in accordance with ADOT's format shall be submitted to ADOT. ADOT will execute a project agreement with FHWA on the local jurisdiction's behalf. A copy of the project agreement will be transmitted to the local jurisdiction. ADOT Construction Operations Section may be contacted regarding change orders and questions on the eligibility of change orders for federal-aid reimbursement of costs.

531 Reimbursement of Contractor Payments

All requests for reimbursement of contractor payments and other eligible federal-aid project costs are submitted to ADOT Accounts Receivable Section, Administrative Services Division. All requests should be prepared using ADOT payment forms and may be made once monthly. All reimbursement requests must be received between the 10th and the 25th of the month. For large projects where monthly contractor payments, or other project related costs, and individual monthly reimbursement requests will exceed \$1,000,000, a cash flow projection schedule should be provided to Accounts Receivable Section prior to the start of the project. This schedule is necessary for the monitoring of ADOT's cash flow and the facilitation of the federal-aid reimbursement process with FHWA.

532 Modified Project Agreement Requests

If the MPO or COG policy provides for federal-aid participation in the cost of change orders and when project costs exceed the amount of federal-aid described in the project agreement, a request for a modified project agreement shall be made to ADOT Project

Funding Section. ADOT will modify the project agreement in accordance with MPO or COG policy regarding federal-aid participation of change orders costs.

533 Project Acceptance

ADOT Construction Operations Section should be contacted to request participation in the final acceptance of all federal-aid projects. FHWA may choose to participate in the final acceptance review process. The final letter of acceptance and project information for the final voucher of project costs shall be submitted to ADOT Local Government Section.

534 Final Voucher Process, Records Retention, and Project Audit

All federal-aid projects require that a Final Voucher be prepared of project costs prior to closing out the project. The local agency will submit to ADOT Local Government Section within four (4) months after project completion and acceptance, a Final Voucher package which includes the final contractor payment, a statement by the Engineer certifying that all the work has been completed and is acceptable, and an invoice detailing total funds spent and the Federal-aid portion of total funds spent. All project documentation must be retained for five (5) years after the project final voucher has been completed. Once the final voucher is processed for the project, the project is closed and no federal-aid reimbursement of project costs can be made.

535 As—Built Plans

As-built plans of the completed project should be prepared within four (4) months of the final acceptance of the project. Costs for as-building the project are eligible for federal-aid participation, should be included as part of the construction engineering cost for the project and should be included in the final voucher cost package that is submitted to ADOT.

540 CERTIFICATION ACCEPTANCE PROCESS REVIEW

ADOT is required to conduct a review of local agency approved federal-aid project procedures and documentation at least once every four years. More frequent reviews may be conducted during the early stages of local agency Certification Acceptance to ensure that federal-aid procedures are being followed and documented. Members of ADOT's Local Government Certification Acceptance Committee will conduct the process review. ADOT will provide at least one month notice prior to the conduct of the project review. FHWA may choose to participate in the process review.

550 LOCAL GOVERNMENT LIAISON

Each local agency with certification acceptance eligibility shall designate a local government liaison who will be responsible for the agency's procedures and policies as they relate to certification acceptance. Specific responsibilities of the liaison include:

- Coordinate with internal Group and Section Project Managers and Financial Managers for all federal-aid projects that will be submitted to ADOT for processing.
- Coordinate with MPO or COG to ensure that the project has been programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) submitted to FHWA for approval.
- Submit requests to ADOT Local Government Section for federal and ADOT TRACS numbers for projects. Information submitted to include the Federal fiscal year the project is programmed and the type and amount of Federal funds programmed for the project. State whether Federal funds are to be used for design, Right-of-Way acquisition, utility relocation, and construction. Provide an estimated budget amount for each phase. State when the project is expected to be advertised for bid.
- Submit the initial design concept report and environmental determination report to the ADOT Local Government Section. ADOT Environmental Planning Group will communicate directly with the sponsor project manager on what type of environmental analysis is required to obtain environmental clearance.
- Coordinate with the ADOT Environmental Planning Group on the resolution of comments to obtain environmental clearance for the project. Ensure that project is advertised for bid within 3 years of the environmental clearance approval date. Projects scheduled to advertise 3 years after the environmental clearance date will need to have their initial environmental document reviewed and approved by the ADOT Environmental Planning Group again for a new or revised environmental clearance date prior to bid advertisement.
- Coordinate with the project manager in the ADOT Local Government Section on the documents to be submitted prior to the project advertising for bid. A copy of the detailed estimate is submitted to ADOT's Civil Rights Department to obtain the DBE percentage goal for the project. Documents submitted to ADOT project manager are:
 - a. Cover letter documenting the dates for environmental clearance, R/W clearance, and utility clearance. A statement that design exceptions were or were not approved for the project. Estimated project cost including construction engineering costs. Estimate the amount of federal funds at the federal pro-rata share of federal participation and the local share of matching funds.
 - b. A Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) PS&E Review sheet.
 - c. A financial Recap sheet in FHWA format.
 - d. A project location map (letter size).

The ADOT project manager will request the authorization of federal funds on behalf of the project sponsor. A letter will be sent to the project sponsor documenting the authorization date and the notice to proceed to incur project costs.

- After the project bids are opened, a copy of the low bid should be submitted to ADOT's Civil Rights Department to ensure that the contractor meets the federal DBE requirements for the project. The project is then awarded.
- Submit to the ADOT project manager a project agreement estimate in FHWA format and a copy of the contract with the contractor.
- Communicate with the project manager on project progress during construction. Submit a project closeout document stating that the project has been completed and accepted by the City/County.
- Submit progress payment requests on the ADOT invoice form on a monthly basis or at the end of the project to the ADOT Accounts Receivable Section. Ensure that the construction engineering costs are included in addition to the contractor payments.

Coordination with ADOT and following the described steps will ensure that all federal-aid projects will be completed efficiently and in accordance with all FHWA procedures. Contact the Local Government Engineer at (602) 712-8107 to obtain copies of any FHWA or ADOT forms required for submittal.

560 LOCAL GOVERNMENT CERTIFICATION ACCEPTANCE LIAISONS

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